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bours: and when the poor man mentioned redress, the Esquire, without any apology whatever, ordered him to pay down what rent was due; which, alas! the poor man was not prepared at that time to do, and lest his goods would be seized, he was under the necessity of dropping the affair.* And the better to stifle the matter, the gentleman let the poor man know he must leave the place he held, as soon as his time was in. How indignant would such a man as that worthy character who took the poor man's part against the bucks, have felt, at such low-minded baseness. I think we have no "Nimrods" of a lower cast in our county. We have a good many well-disposed characters in this place as well as with you: men who administer justice in the strictest and most proper manner, and I am sure had

they seen insult and abuse given the poor man at the races, they would not have let it pass unpunished. It is, however, very strange, that so liberal and well informed a people as the inhabitants of the province of Ulster, should be divided by so many internal broils and commotions, even in the very centre of your most noted towns and public places. It certainly looks as if there were only a few who do their duty, and a great many others who not only neglect theirs, but aid and assist the open violation of the laws, as appears from the late disastrous affair in the town of Belfast. But it can be truly said, that the province of Ulster has nursed in its bosom, for these many years past, the *sacred* flame of division, and with the greatest industry has spread it through too many parts of the country. But I hope the time is fast approaching, when such base wickedness shall meet with its well-merited reward.

With profound respect, I am your humble servant,

A CARLOW PEASANT.

* I was informed, that the same Esquire is a very active prosecutor, where he can find the smallest shadow of power; and he has several times attended as an elder at the Synod of Ulster!

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF GENERAL VALLENCEY.

HITHERTO the Biographical pages of the Belfast Magazine have been chiefly occupied by sketches of the lives of philosophers, patriots, or statesmen; and when deserving of record, some who had filled less important stations in life. At present, a small deviation is made from the general plan, and the reader is presented with the memoirs of a soldier, whose life was mostly spent in this country, and who was zealously devoted to the study of the

language, ancient history, and antiquities of Ireland.

The subject of this memoir was a native of England, but from long residence, and patriotic attachment to Ireland, he might have been called an Irishman. At an early age he received a liberal, but not a collegiate education; and while young, entered into the army in the 12th Regiment of foot: in which regiment he gradually rose to be Captain. While he was in this regiment, he was quartered for several years at Gibraltar; and of that celebrated fortress he made a sketch,

from which a painting was afterwards executed by Mr. Ashford, an ingenious Irish artist.

On the 12th regiment coming to Ireland, in 1758, Captain Vallencey was admitted into the corps of engineers on that establishment; and was advanced, by regular gradations to the rank of General, his commission of Lieutenant-General bearing date 1798, and that of General, 1803.

In 1759, he published, in Dublin, "The Field Engineer: translated from the French of M. Le Chevalier de Clairac;" to which he added, "Remarks on M. Saxe's new System of Fortification, proposed in his *Reveries, or Memoirs of the Art of War.*" This work may be properly called the beginning of General Vallencey's literary career. About the same time, he also published, "A Treatise on Stone-cutting," another on "Tanning," and some other small tracts of less note.

Nearly at the same period, he commenced a military survey of Ireland: this was so pleasing to the King, that he encouraged it by solid pecuniary favours. Yet, from some cause with which we are unacquainted, this survey was never completed.

In 1760, General Vallencey was among the number of those who marched to oppose M. Thourot, at Carrickfergus; which place he entered as the last of the enemy embarked. In Carrickfergus he remained some days, and took a correct plan of the town and Castle, which he transmitted to the then Lord Lieutenant. A copy from this plan he also sent to Wilson's Dublin Magazine, in which it afterwards appeared, as also an account of Thourot's invasion: both of these were copied into several periodical publications in Ireland, and in Great Britain.

Having, from his arrival in this kingdom, devoted much of his time to the study of the Irish language, in which he made very considerable progress, in 1773, he published in Dublin, a Grammar, entitled, "A Grammar of the Ibero-Celtic, or Irish Language; with an Essay on the Celtic Language, &c.:" which work was re-printed in 1781, with some additions.

This work certainly displays much industrious research; and coming from an Englishman, perhaps enhances its value to Irishmen; yet, in candour, it must be pronounced incomplete. It throws no light on the former state of the language, its ancient alphabet, prosody, brehon laws, nor poetic compositions.

Notwithstanding these omissions, it is probable no work was ever written with a greater degree of zeal, even by a native; this is fully evinced, by his supposing the Irish language to be the *parent of all others*. It is likewise worthy of remark, that in the above-mentioned work, he collates the Punic language with the Irish.

In 1781, he was employed in corresponding with the learned Governor Pownall, on the subject of the mount or barrow at New Grange, near Drogheda. In this correspondence, he contends for the mount being an Arch-druid's tomb; the three cells being three altars, and the characters the name of Aongus, the Arch-druid. The whole of this correspondence was afterwards printed in the Minutes of the Society of Antiquaries.

In 1773, he was active secretary to a society formed that year in Dublin, under the patronage of Sir Lucius O'Brien, Bart., for the purpose of illustrating the Antiquities of Ireland. In the latter end of the same year, he prevailed on the Society to appoint a committee who

published and distributed upwards of 4000 copies of queries relative to Ireland, for the purpose of receiving answers, and giving to the world a more copious and correct view of this kingdom, than had been hitherto done. But so very little does a taste for such things prevail in this country, that after waiting upwards of four years, they obtained only 40 answers in *all*, and the society dropped their intended work; and with it the General is said to have lost all hopes of being useful to Ireland in the manner he most wished.

Though disappointed in his favourite scheme, he still considered that something might be done in this way, even by an individual; and a few years after, he resolved to publish some detached pieces of antiquity in the *Hibernian Magazine*, published in Dublin by T. Walker. To this work he also sent some neat drawings which he had made to accompany the descriptions; but the engravings were so miserably executed, that he became disgusted, and relinquished his design.

In 1774, he began a *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, which at first was a very useful compilation, consisting of some scarce and valuable tracts relative to Ireland. This plan, it is much to be regretted, he soon deserted, and indulged in such profound speculations in language and etymology, as were far beyond the comprehension of the many, and puzzled and confounded the few who had leisure and abilities to examine them; and, in consequence, the sale became so limited, that the work was soon discontinued.

From 1774, until 1781, nothing worthy of insertion concerning him occurred; but that year, the Right Hon. William Burton Conyngham, a gentleman highly distinguished for his learning and abilities, and who had made, at a vast expense, an ex-

cellent collection of drawings of the monastic and military antiquities of Ireland, wishing to unite the labours of the most enlightened antiquarians towards the illustration of this subject, prevailed on the following gentlemen to form themselves into a society for this purpose.

Right. Hon. William Burton Conyngham, *President*.

Charles O'Connor, Esq.

Colonel Charles Vallancey.

Rev. Edward Ledwich, L.L.D.

Dr. Ellis.

Rev. Mervyn Archdall.

William Beauford, A.M.

These gentlemen were resolved to revive the *Collectanea*, which had been dormant some years, and the following notice was given to the public:—"The Editor is happy in informing the public, that a number of gentlemen of learning and abilities have applied themselves to the study and illustration of the antiquities of this country, and that their labours will be published forthwith under the title of the *Collectanea*."

A combination of such talents, apparently so firmly united, bid fair to accomplish the avowed and desirable object; and that year Mr. Ledwich contributed two numbers, and Mr. Beauford two; but, soon after, difference arising concerning colonization and etymology, the society dissolved. The work was continued by Col. Vallancey, with some trifling contributions from Mr. O'Connor, to July, 1790, when it finally closed.

In 1784, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of London*; and in 1786, he published,

* He was also a member of the Antiquarian Societies of London, Edinburgh, and Perth; and a member of the Royal Irish Academy, and of the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia; but the exact time of his admission into each cannot be

"An Essay towards illustrating the ancient history of the Britannic Isles." This work might be justly called a preface to the ancient history of Ireland; and it was soon followed by his "Vindication of the Ancient History of Ireland," with copious notes and remarks to each chapter.

In 1788, he published, in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, "A Memoir of the Language, Manners, and Customs of the Anglo-Saxon colony, settled in the Baronies of Forth and Bargie, in the County of Wexford, Ireland, in 1167, 1168, and 1169." This is truly an interesting memoir; it gives an excellent account of the customs and manners of the inhabitants, a vocabulary of their language, and an ancient song, which has been preserved by tradition from the arrival of the colony. In the same volume, he also gave an account of an ancient monument in the church of Lusk, County of Dublin, and enters into a disquisition on its hieroglyphics, which he explains by referring to his favourite *Hiberno-Sythian* dialect.

About this time, he published some papers in the *Archæologia*; in vol. 7th, page 276, are his "Observations on the Alphabet of the Pagan Irish; and of the age in which Finn and Ossian lived;" and in vol. 8th, page 302, his "Observations on an American inscription;" or more properly, if we credit some intelligent travellers, rude marks on a rock at Deighton, North America. Concerning this inscription, some persons had previously passed bold conjectures; but he differs much from them all, and pronounces

stated with accuracy. He was also one of the Vice-Presidents of the Dublin Society for many years, and discharged the duties of that office with such strict attention, that he was seldom absent one day.

the whole to be the work of a learned people, from which, he doubts not but the Irish were descended.

In 1797, appeared his long expected work, "The Ancient History of Ireland, proved from the Sanscrit books of the Bramins of India; dedicated to the President and Members of the Royal Academy." In the same year he published in the "Oriental Collections," "A Memoir on the Oriental emigrations of the Hibernian Druids."

These works display much extensive reading, learning, laborious research, and ingenuity; yet, unless a person be endowed with a large portion of *Irish Antiquarian belief*, they will be thought very unsatisfactory; many of the references being so very far-fetched, that most readers, after the most attentive perusal, will be little short of being bewildered. General Valencey's partiality to his adopted country, at times, appeared too strong for his judgment. He saw Irish in almost every thing, and every where.

From the period of the last noticed work, he wrote nothing that has appeared before the public; and if we except his constant attendance at the Dublin Society, mixed little in public life; residing in Mount-street, Merrion-square, Dublin; where he died, August 8th, 1812, aged 92.

BRIEF MEMOIRS OF THE LATE HUGH M'AULEY,

IF the pen of the biographer be exclusively employed in the relation of the martial exploits of the hero, the penetrating judgment of the distinguished philosopher; or the acute and vigorous genius of the statesman, I may drop mine in the ink-stand, and continue in silence. I am inclined, however, to think, that unripened genius, when cut off